

Second, claims 13-15 should be examined at the same time claims 28-30 are examined because the usage control apparatus defined in claims 13-15 is configured to control the device defined in claims 28-30. In particular, the device defined in claims 28-30 is configured to receive a process command from the usage control apparatus defined in claims 13-15 to execute the process. Thus, the usage control apparatus of claims 13-15 and the device of claims 28-30 are subcombinations in a single system.

Third, claims 1-12 should be examined at the same time that claims 13-15 are examined because both groups are directed toward similar subject matter, i.e., subject matter that is patentably indistinct. For example, claims 2 and 13 define similar subject matter, claims 4 and 14 define similar subject matter, and claims 6 and 15 define similar subject matter.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that there is no examination and search burden involved in examining claims 1-27 at the same time that claims 28-30 are examined. Accordingly, Applicants request that the election of species requirement be modified to the extent necessary to enable claims 1-30 to be examined at the same time.

If any fees are due to effect consideration of this paper, then the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No. MIPFP080).

Respectfully submitted,
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